

Kallan Wale)

Message



Baba Isher Singh Ji (Kaleran Wale)

Baba Banda Singh Bahadar (1670–1716) is considered one of the greatest and most hallowed warriors and martyrs of the SIkhs. He became a Sikh warrior known for his struggle against the Mughal Empire in the early eighteenth century.

Famous for the sack of the Mughal provincial capital, Sarhind, he is revered as one of the most hallowed martyrs of the Khalsa. His confrontation with the Mughal administration in Northern India, though brief, was strong enough to shake its foundations. The agrarian uprising that he led in the Punjab was the foundation on which the Dal Khalsa, the Sikh Misls and Maharaja Ranjit Singh built the edifice which finally culminated with Ranjit Singh capturing Lahore in 1799 and establishing the Sikh Kingdom of the Punjab, including colonization of deeper Afghanistan, in Muslim heartland.

One of the most revolutionary acts of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur, after establishing his authority in Punjab, was the abolition of the zamindari system, and granting proprietary rights to the actual tillers of the land.

To mark the 300th anniversary of the victory of Sarhind by Baba Banda Singh Bahadar, a special Fateh Samagam has been organized from 16-18th July 2010 at Guru Nanak Sikh School, Hayes. As part of the programme, on 18th July, a Fateh March will proceed from Sri Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Southall to Guru Nanak Sikh School, Hayes. Ten Prominent practising Sikhs from round the World will be honoured who have reached the top of their career while being loyal to Guru Sahib and the Khalsa Panth. Also, a statue of Baba Banda Singh Bahadar will be unveiled and installed in the forecourt of the school to join with a similar statue of Maharaja Banjit Singh that was installed in the school to join with a similar statue of Maharaja

Ranjit Singh that was installed in 2002. And a new wing of the school will be opened in September 2010, costing £20M, which will also incorporate a 'State of the Art' Gurdwara Sahib.

An effort has been made through this booklet to deliver the message of the great Sikh heritage at every doorstep. This special booklet has been prepared in Punjabi and English for free distribution among the masses.

Baba Amar Singh Foundated Common Nanakse Themselve Common

Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar

Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar was appointed the Chief General of the Sikh army by Gurū Gobind Singh Jī. Gurū Sāhib granted him the task of securing the freedom of the Sikh homeland from the foreign tyrant rulers.

Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar, the eighteenthcentury Sikh warrior who for the first time seized territory for the Khālsā and paved the way for the ultimate conquest of the Punjab by them, was born as Lachhman Dev on 16 October 1670 at Rājourī in the Punchh district of Kashmīr. His father was Rām Dev, a ploughman. True to the very traditions of his times, Lachhman Dev developed into a youth of active habits, full of energy and fond of playing and wrestling with a wandering lust for the jungles. Since his early boyhood, he was fond of shooting, hunting and archery. The sight of a dying doe during one of the hunting excursions proved a turning-point in his life. He shot a doe, her two young ones fell from the womb writhing to death before his presence after

their premature birth. The pitiable

and miserable sight struck the

tender chords of his beant.
So strong was his tense of regret that he left his home to become an ascetic. He was then fifteen years of age.

He wandered from place to place in search of peace of mind. He first received instruction from a mendicant, Jānakī Prasād. At the shrine of Rām Thamman near Kasūr, he joined Bairāgī Rām Dās and was given the nāme of Mādho Dās Bairāgī. Roaming about the country for some years, he settled down in the Pānchwaṭī woods, near Nāsīk He learnt yoga from Yogī Aughaṛ Nāth and after his death, left Nāsīk and established a math

(monastery) of his own at Nander on the banks of river Godavari. He became a master in the art of austerities, occultism, unnatural practices and long continuance in un-natural positions.

Here he had an encounter with the Tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh It who happened to visit his hermitary in September 1708.

Regardless of any formality Guru Sāhib seated himself on the hermit's raised bed. On receiving information from his followers, Madho Das came back running to the camp getting red with rage and tried his occulent powers. When all his efforts and powers failed, he kneeled down and asked the Guru humbly, "Who are you?".

Guru said, "He whom you already know".

Mādho Dās enquired, "What do I know about you!"

Guru Ji replied, "Just peep into your own mind and think it over".

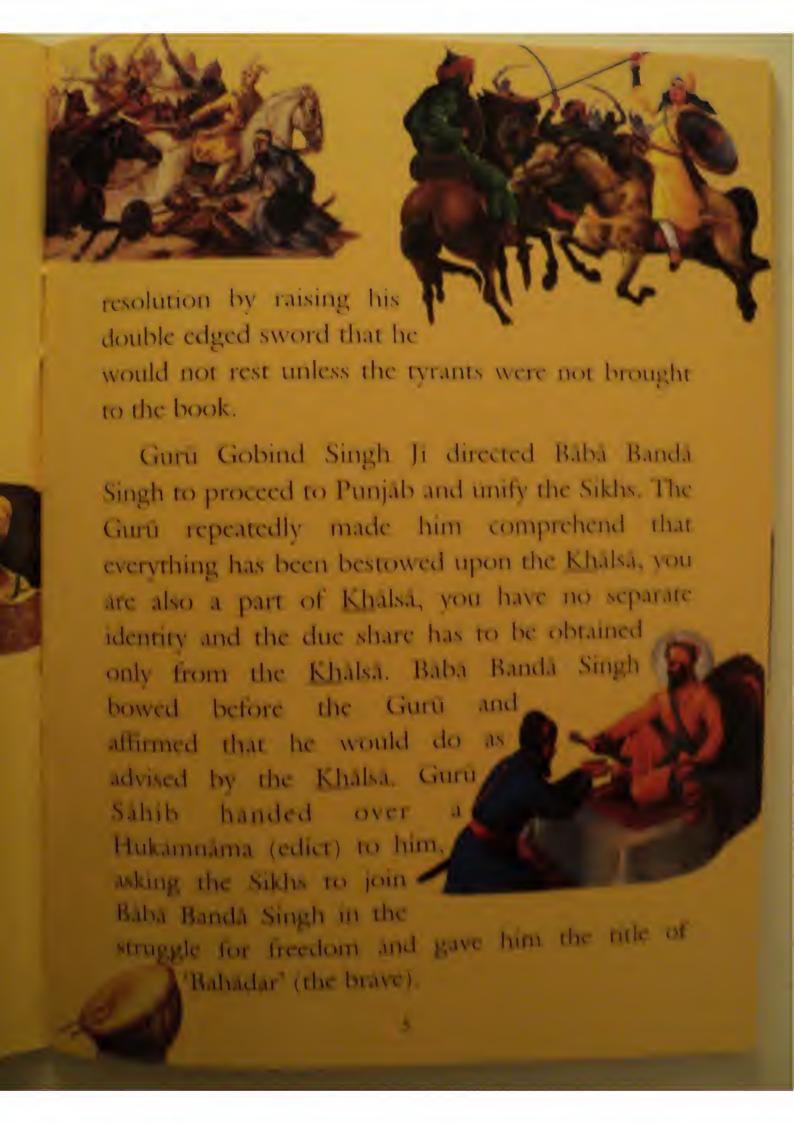
After a pause Mādho Dās said, "Oh! so you are Guru Gobind Singh".

Gurū asked, "But tell me who are you?"

Madho Das replied, "Master, I am your banda (slave). Kindly do me a favour by making me your own Sikh"

Guru Gobind Singh Ji rook him to his own camp, made him take the vows

of Khālsā by administering the nectar of two edged sword and gave him the name of Bandā Singh, from the word banda he had used for himself proclaiming his allegiance to the Gurü. Henceforth Bandā Singh acted upon the principles of Sikhism. He listened to the history of the Sikhs with great attention. Hearing about the matvrdom of Gurū Arjan Dev Jī and Gurū Tegh Bahādar Jī, tireless efforts of Gurū Gobind Singh Ji to withstand and repulse tyrant rule of Mughals, the battles fought with the hilly rajas, sacrifice of the two elder Sāhibzādās, bricking alive of the two younger Sāhibzādas of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, he was horrified and experienced great transformation within himself. Before his own eyes, he saw his master Gurū Gobind Singh Jī being attacked by two treachesome Pathans. While listening to the gruesome story of the great Sikh martyrs, Bandā Singh made a determination and took a



Blessed by Gurū Gobind Singh Jī,

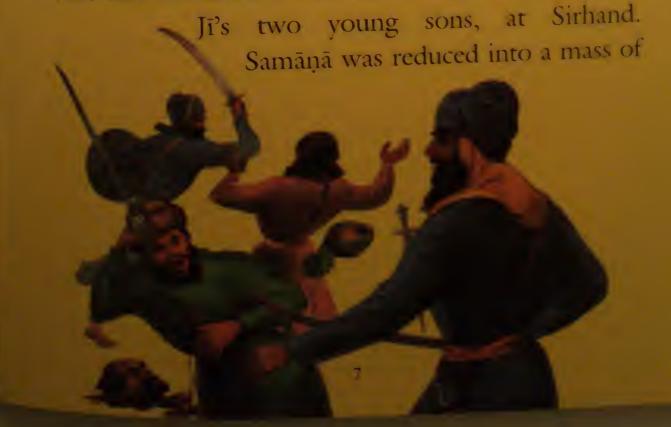
who bestowed upon him a drum (Nagāṛā), a Nishān Sāhib, Hukamnāmā and five arrows from his own quiver as emblems of authority, and accompanied by five Sikhs - Binod Singh, Kāhan Singh, Bāj Singh, Dayā Singh and Rām Singh, he set out towards the north determined to chastise the tyrannical Mughal faujdār of Sirhand. As he reached Punjāb, Sikhs began to show their solidarity with his mission, amongst the first to join him were Bhāī Fateh Singh (a descendant of Bhāī Bhagatū), Karam Singh and Dharam Singh (descendants of Bhāī Rūpā) and Ālī Singh, Mālī Singh and other Sikhs of Salaudī. The ancestors of Phūlkīān rulers, Rām Singh and Tilok Singh provided material help.

Bābā Bandā Singh enjoyed a good following by the time he reached Punjāb. There came certain moments when he expressed anxiety as to who would bear the huge expenditure. But the

Ardās (prayers) had such an impact that the common folk began to come forth with the amount of daswandh (one tenth of the income) at

their disposal. Bābā Jī, very generous as he already was, began to spend money without any reservation. He helped the poor and the needy. No one went back empty handed after meeting him. It was declared by the beat of the drum that whosoever had been distressed by the authorities could file complaint directly with the Khālsā.

Bandā Singh Bahādar first resolved to commence operations by teaching a lesson to the faujdār of Kaithal for the attrocities committed by him and then to attack Samāṇā. In November 1709, Bandā Singh attacked Samāṇā, the native town of Jalāl-ud-Dīn, the executioner of Gurū Tegh Bahādar, and of the two executioners - Shāshal Beg and Bāshal Beg who had volunteered to behead Gurū Gobind Singh



smoking ruins.

After the attack of Samāṇā, Bandā Singh occupied Ghuṛhām, Ṭhaskā, Shāhābād and Mustafābād. The town of Kapūrī near Paṭiālā, whose faujdār, Qadam-ud-Dīn, was notorious for his atrocities on Hindūs and Sikhs, was razed to the ground.

Next came the turn of Saḍhaurā, whose chief, Usmān Khān, had not only opressed the Hindūs but had also tortured to death the Muslim saint, Sayyid Buddhū Shāh, for having helped Gurū Gobind Singh Jī in the battle of Bhangāṇī. Bābā Bandā Singh marched towards Sāḍhaurā to avenge the torture and death of Pīr Buddhū Shāh as per injunction of the Gurū. Pīr Buddhū Shāh had fought the battle Bhangāṇī from the Gurū's side with his five hundred followers and four sons. Two

of his sons and about a hundred followers had fought heroically to death in the battle.

On the eve of his victory over Sadhaurā, Bābā Bandā Singh got the

bestowed upon Pir Ji, procured and handed them over to the family of Pir Buddhū Shāh.

It came to the notice of Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar

that some of the assailants indulged in loot and plunder, so he reminded them of the Guru's injunction that protect the innocent and at the same time the tyrant should not be spared. He also instructed to rule according to the Sikh tenets and no one should be allowed to indulge in loot and heinous activities.

Bābā Bandā Singh took this long circuitious route for two reasons, first to await for Sikhs from the Doābā and Mājhā areas of Punjāb to join his force before he attacked Sirhand where two younger Sāhibzādās of Gurū Sāhib - Bābā Fateh Singh and Bābā Zorāwar Singh had met with a cruel fate at the hands of Wazīr Khān, the Mughal governor. And secondly to cut off Sirhand from its satellite towns like Shāhbād etc., to weaken it strategically

Wazir Khān was being apprised of Banda

Singh's march towards
Sirhand punishing the
evil doers. Wazir Khān
held a darbār at Sirhand
and put the Sikh and
Hindu populace behind the bars.

He imposed restrictions on the troops. He was feeling very much perturbed. Meanwhile, the Khālsā at Amritsar received the happy news of Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar's destruction of Samāṇā and Saḍhaurā with satisfaction. The Singhs adopted a Gurmatā at Akāl Takht Sāhib to devastate Sīrhānd before retiring.



The Singhs from Western side marched towards Sirhand via Kartārpur, Jalandhar and Hoshiārpur after crossing Satluj towards the hills and passing through Ropar and Kharar to join the Singhs being led by Bābā Bandā Singh for a common attack. The Singhs met the advancing troops of Bābā Bandā Singh on the Banūṛ-Kharar road with sky rending ovations of "Bole so Nihāl - Sat Srī Akāl".

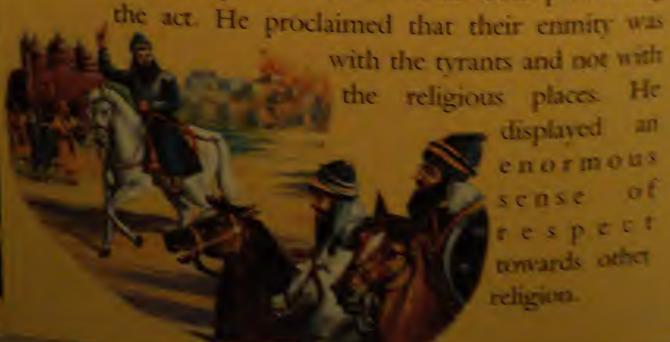
Nawāb Wazīr <u>Kh</u>ān saw his very end hidden in this historic alliance. He conspired with the nephew of Suchā Nand to join Bandā Singh's force and leave him amidst the battle. But Bābā Jī saw through his plot and commented that



whosoever is not true to his salt, dies instantly. On seeing his schemes a failure, Wazīr Khān raised Haidri flag and proclaimed Jehād or a religious war. He personally held the commands of his troops. The two opposing armies met at the historic plains of Chappar Chirī where pitched battles were fought.

Wazir Khān was killed by Bhāi Bāj Singh in the battle of Chappar Chiri on 12 May 1710, and on 14 May the city of Sirhand was captured. Suchā Nands residence was reduced to ashes and the palace was captured.

The mosque from where the decree for bricking alive of the two younger Sāhibzādās of Guru Gobind Singh was declared, was just going to be destroyed when Bābā Bandā Singh came forward with his troops and forbade them from performing the act. He provide med these decrees the provide med the second medium.



Bhai Baj Singh, one of Baba Banda Singh's companions, was appointed governor of Sirhand.

Baba Ali Singh was designated as the deputy governor. Baba Banda Singh Bahadar was now the virtual master of

remitories between the Yamuna and the Sutlej, yeilding an annual revenue of thirty-six lacs of rupees. He declared the Sikh rule in the liberated territory. He made a declaration for the abolishment

of Jagardari system and acted upon

the principle of the land to tillers'. He reduced taxes and released subsidies. He made the old Fort of Mukhlisgarh, in the safety of the Himalayas, his

Longarh. Fifty two more fortresses were also got constructed. It was made known that whersoever and whosoever was being tormented by the authorities, might report him unhesitatingly. There was created an environment of 'Chear to the Sikhs and woe to the foe'.

He assumed the style of royalty and introduced a new calendar dating from his capture of Sirhand. He had new coins struck

in the name of Guru Nānak - Gurū Gobind Singh. Besides the names of the Gurūs, the inscription of his seal contained the word degh (the kettle in Guru kā Langar signifying charity) and tegh (the sword of the Khālsā signifying power):

Degh-o-tegh-o-fateh, Nusrat-i-bedirang Yaft az Nānak, Gurū Gobind Singh.

The kettle and sword (symbols of charity and power), victory and incessant blessings have been obtained from Gurū Nanak - Gobind Singh

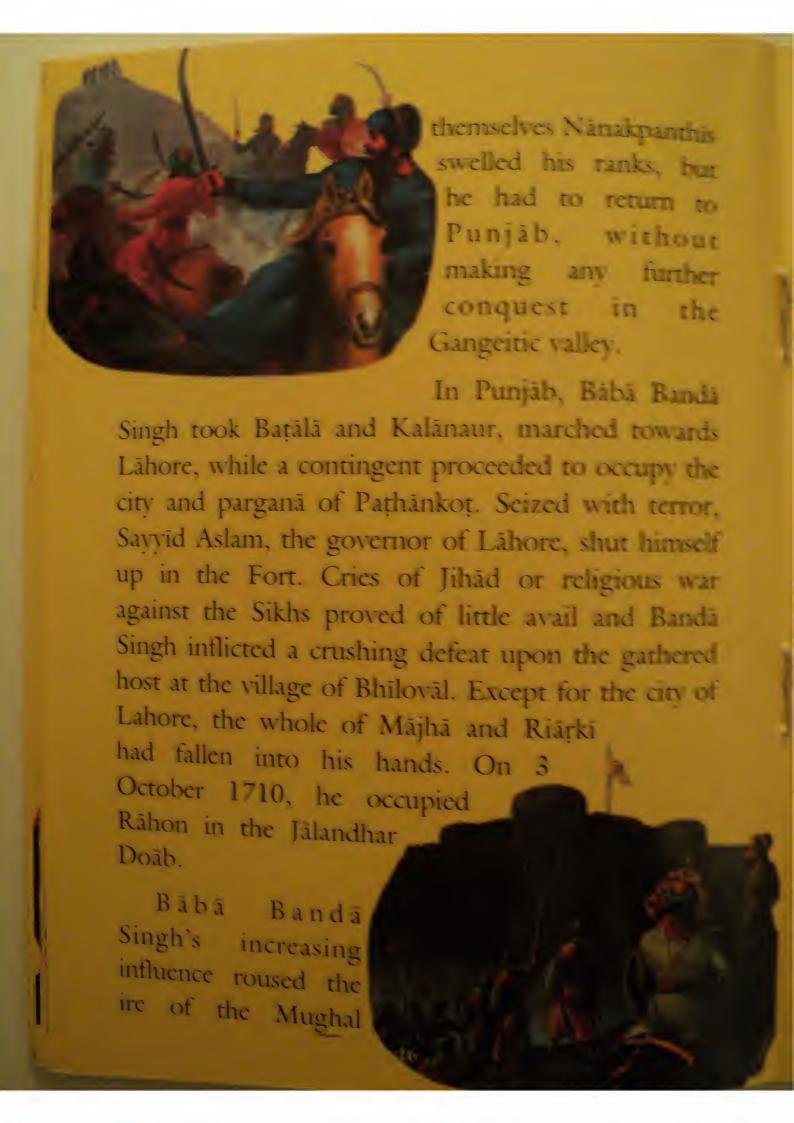


Bābā Bandā Singh appointed capable and honest Sikh officials to manage the affairs of the State. He strictly followed the principles laid down by Gurū Sāhib and made his State a genuine democracy where justice, equity and good conscience prevailed.

Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar's rule, though short lived, had a far reaching impact on the history of the Punjāb. With it began the decay of the Mughal

authority and the demolition of the feudal system of society it had created. He abolished the Zamīndārī system and made the tillers masters of the land by conferring upon them proprietory rights. He was liberal in his treatment of Hindūs and Muslims many of whom joined the Sikh faith and took up arms under him.

In the summer of 1710, Bābā Bandā Singh crossed the Yamunā and seized Sahāranpur. On his arrival at Nanautā on 11 July 1710, crowds of Guijars, who called



emperor Bahādur Shāh, who came northwards from the Deccan, and commanded the governors of Delhi and Oudh and other Mughal officers to punish the Sikhs. The order he issued on 10 December 1710 was a general warrant for the faujdārs to kill the worshippers of Nānak, i.e. Sikhs, wherever found (Nānak-prastān rā har jā kih ba-yāband ba-qatl rasānand). Even in face of this edict for wholesale destruction of the Sikhs, Bābā Bandā Singh

maintained towards the Muslims generarally an attitude of tolerance and co-existence. A report submitted to Emperor Bahādur Shāh stated that as many as five thousand Muslims of the neighbourhood of Kalānaur and

Bățălă had joined Bābā Bandā Singh and that they were allowed the fullest liberty to shout their religious call, azān, and recite khutbā and namāz, in the army of the Sikhs and that they were properly looked after and fed

In 1710, a massive imperial force drove the Sikhs from Sirhand and other places to take shelter in the Fort of Lohgarh in the submontane region. At this time, Bābā Bandā Singh had a force of sixty thousand, including horsemen and

soldiers. For want of provisions, the Sikhs were reduced to rigorous straits but on the night of 10 December 1710, Bābā Bandā Singh made a desperate bid to escape and hacked his way out of the imperial cordon.

Baba Banda Singh Bahadar was far from finished and, within a fortnight of his escape from Lohgarh, he bagan to send out hukamnāmās exhorting the people to carry on the fight. He ransacked the submountainous state of Bilāspur; Mandi, Kullū and Chambā submitted to his authority of their own accord. In June 1711, as he descended towards the plains, he was engaged in an action at Bahrāmpur near Jammū, in which the Mughal troops were worsted. Bandā Singh was, however, forced in the end again to retreat into the hills.

After the death of Emperor Bahadur Shah on 28

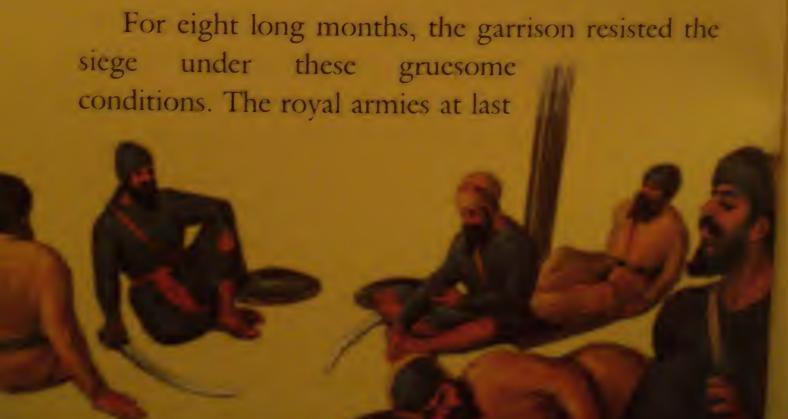
February 1712,
the wat of
succession for the
imperial throne
and the disturbed
state of affairs in
Delfu brought Baba
Banda Singh some
respite, but Famukh-Siyar

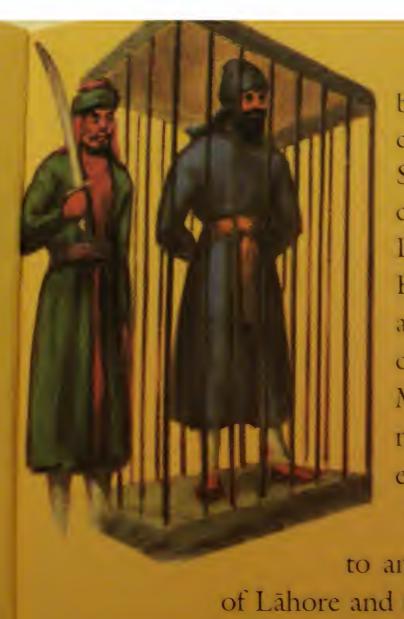
who ascended the throne of Delhi in 1713 accelerated the campaign against the Sikhs. They were hounded out of the plains where Baba Banda Singh had reoccupied Sadhaura and Lohgagh.

Baba Ji established his headquarters on the banks of the Chanab from October 13, 1714 to February 1715. The Khalsa again made preparations of war whole heartedly. Baba Ji came back to Punjab and started the construction of a fortress near Bajala. But he had to retreat due to sudden attack of the Mughal forces.

The main column, led by Bābā li, was subjected to a most stringent siege at the village of Gurdas-Nangal, about six kilometres from Gurdaspur. It was a mere tall mound. The walls were raised high. A ditch was dug and filled up with water by

breaking a bank of nearby canal. The supplies having run out, the Sikhs suffered great hardship and lived on animal flesh which they had to eat raw owing to lack of firewood. To quote the Muslim diarist of the time, Khāfi Khān, "Many died of dysentary and privation....When all the grass was gone, they gathered leaves from the trees. When these were consumed, they stripped the bark and broke off the small shoots, dried them, ground them and used them instead of flour, thus keeping body and soul together. They collected the bones of animals and used them in the same way. Some assert that they saw a few of the Sikhs cut flesh from their own thighs, roast it, and eat it."





broke through and captured Bābā Bandā Singh and his famishing companions on 7 December 1715. Everybody was surprised as to how the Singhs could defer mighty Mughal army with such meager war weapons and equipments.

They were at first taken to and paraded in the streets of Lāhore and then sent to Delhi where they arrived on 27 February 1716. The cavalcade to the imperial capital was an awful sight. The procession was so arranged as to impart a strict lesson to others. Besides 740 Sikh prisoners in heavy

chains forced to walk on feet, it comprised seven hundred cartloads of the heads of the

Sikhs with another 2,000 stuck upon pikes. Each head was fixed on spear and was carried away by a trooper. The dead body

of a cat was also mounted on a spear to show that even a cat was not left alive there. Singhs' only prayer was that Vāhigurū might grant them unshaken faith, destroy the infidels and remain steadfast to the last hair of their body and to their last breath. Last of all followed Bābā Jī in an iron cage on an elephant. After passing through the city, the procession ended at Red Fort.

It was a tamasha for the residents of Delhi. The Sikhs did not show any signs of mental agony. Someone from the spectators passed a remark on the Sikhs, "This is all because of your excesses."



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Prompt came the reply from the Sikhs, "No, it is the Will of God".

Then someone said, "Now you will be killed".

The Sikhs replied, "Kill us. We are not afraid of death. Had we been afraid, how could we have fought battles against you".

By Farrukh-Siyar's order Baba Banda Singh Bahadar and some two dozen leading Sikhs were



imprisoned in the Fort, while the remaining 694 were handed over to the Kotwal, Sarbrah Khan, to be executed at the Kotwali Chabutra at the rate of a hundred a day. A decision was made to execute 100 Singhs daily.

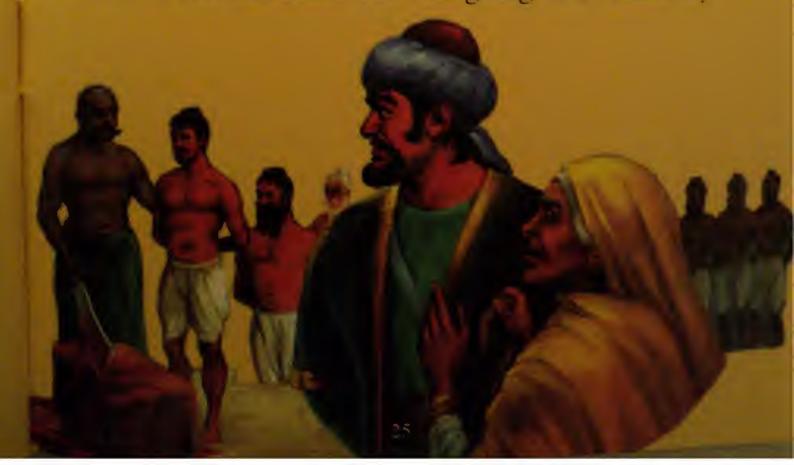
On 5th March 1716, a raised platform was erected in front of Sis Ganj Sāhib where Guru Tegh Bahādar was martyred. One hundred Sikhs were daily brought to the place for execution one by one. None faltered, none uttered a sigh and no one exhibited fear. Contemporary historian Khāfi Khān writes, "The Sikhs not only depicted steadfastness but surprised everyone when they tried to outbid another in offering themselves for sacrifice. They even cracked jokes with the executioners. The fact



so blissfully would appear to some a fiction but it is indeed a hard fact".

Among those to be executed was a lad on whose face soft hairs were just appearing. He was the only son of a widow. He had been recently married and was made a prisoner when the Sikhs were passing through his village on their way to Delhi. On hearing the arrest and death sentence of her son, his mother somehow reached Delhi. She made an appeal before the Emperor that her son had been led astray; he is not a Sikh and his life should be spared. The Emperor issued orders for his release.

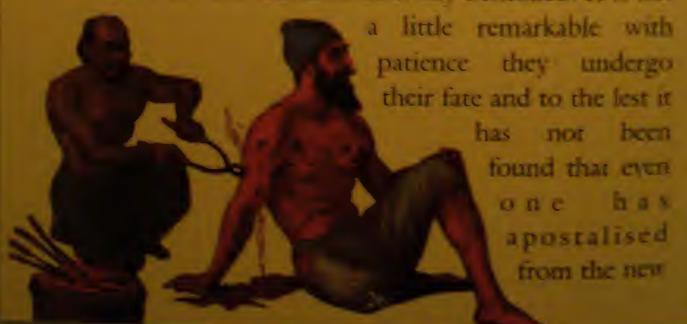
The mother reached the very day when son was marked for execution. He was going to be killed by



the executioner. The Kotwal carried out the orders with the remarks that according to the mother of the youngman, he is not a Sikh by faith. The boy declined to go and shouted, "My mother is a liar. I am a devoted Sikh of the Guru. Finish me with my companions. I have no time to lose. The delay is painful to me." The heart rending cries of his mother could not budge him.

Everybody was surprised to witness as the how rushed back to his place, put his head before the executioner and was martyred. Everyone was exclaiming, "Of what different mould the Suchs were made".

A contemporary writer Wheeler has given an account of this mass martyrdom of Sikhs in Early Record of British India'. On page 180, he states "There are one hundred each day beheaded. It is not



formed religion."

It was very baffling for Mughal rulers that how could Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar could rule without any treasure. They were in search of their lost treasure.

Mughal forces digged Gurdas Nangal three feet deep in search of the treasure. Even they cut slit each executed Sikh's abdomen and searched his



intestines for gold coins they may have swallowed. They even tortured Bābā Jī for six months to enquire about their lost treasure. They did not believe that all the treasure had been distributed amongst the needy.

Then Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar and his remaining companions were taken to the tomb of Khwaja Qutb ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki, near the Qutab Minar. There he was offered the choice between Islam and death. Upon his refusal to renounce his faith, his four-yearold son, Ajai Singh, was hacked to pieces before his eyes and his heart and liver was forcibly put in Bābā Jī's mouth. But he displayed heavenly calmness. There was no expression of grief and was unruffled. He himself was subjected to the harshest torments. His eyes were pulled out and hands and feet chopped off. His flesh was torn with red-hot pincers and finally his body was cut up limb by limb. This occurred on 25 June 1716.

Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar sacrificed himself alongwith the companions, but never let the faith be tarnished. The Sikhs neither let the flag down

lestowed upon them by Guru Gobind Singh Ji nor let its colour fade by dint of their sacrifices, despite paying heavily for the fulfillment of this purpose.

Before leaving for his heavenly abode, Gurū Gobind Singh Jī had blessed Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar with divine boons - five arrows, a large drum, Hukamnāmā, a Sikh flag and

five Sikhs as companions. Gurū Sāhib while installing him as General of the Sikhs, had ordained him with a mission and that mission

accomplished by Baba
Bandā Singh Bahādar in
May 1710 when he
completely uprooted the
Mughal regime, while
fighting the fierce battle of
Chappar Chirī in Sirhand. This
was for the first time that a
Sikh rule was established by
replacing the Mughal regime

the territories ranging from river Yamunā to Sutlej. It was through Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar that the path of conquest

and freedom was discovered by the Khālsā.

Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar was the great Sikh general who even at the time of his rule was completely dedicated to his Gurū and Gurū's principles, which he demonstrated by embracing martyrdom rather than getting swayed away from his faith.

In addition to being a great warrior and general who shook the very roots of tyrant's rule in Punjāb, Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar was so humble that he always said, "I am a humble servant of great Gurū Gobind Singh Jī who created Khālsā". Later the Khālsā rule in Punjāb was completely established on the foundations laid by Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar. The life of such great Sikh warrior and general would remain a permanent source of inspiration for the coming generations, and this spirit remains enshrined in the couplet sung with great enthusiasm

after the Sikh prayer (Ardās):

Rāj karegā Khālsā, ākī rahe nā koe.

Khwār hoe sabh milenge, bache sharan jo hoe.

The Khālsā shall rule.

No hostile refractory shall survive.

Frustrated, they shall all submit and those who come in for shelter shall be protected.



Historical places related to the life of Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar

Gurdwara Banda Ghat, Nander - This is the place in Nander, Maharashtra where Baba Banda Singh (Madho Das Bairagi) had an encounter with the Tenth Master, Guru Gobind Singh Ji in 1708.

Gurdwarā Shahīd Ganj, Maidān Chapaṛ-Chiṛi - Pitched battle was fought at the historic plains of Chapaṛ-Chiṛi between the forces of Babā Banda Singh Bahādar and Nawab Wazır Khan of Sīrhand Wazīr Khān was killed in this battle and many Sikhs also attained martyrdom. This place is situated on the way from Greater Mohali to Sirhand in Punjāb.

Gurdwärä Fatchgärh Sähib (Qilā Sirhand) - The two younger Sāhibzādās of Guru Gobind Singh Jī - Bābā Zorāwar Singh and Fatch Singh were bricked alive at this spot. In combat, Bāba Banda Singh Bahadar conquered the fort of Sirhand.

Gurdwarā Qilā Lohgarh Sāhib, Saḍhaurā - Baba Banda Singh Bahādar laid the foundation of the capital of the first Sikh Sate at a place earlier called Mukhlisgarh, Qilā Lohgarh near Saḍhaura. From this place he set up the seal and sruck the coins in the name of Gurus

Gurdwarā (Garhī) Gurdās Nangal - This is the place in village

Gurdas Nangal in district Gurdaspur, Punjab where Bābā Bandā Singh Bahadar was subjected to the most stringent seige for eight months, under gruesome conditions. Bābā Jī and his companions were finally arrested.

Gurdwarā Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādar, Delhi - This is the place in Mehraulī near Qutab Minār, Delhi where Bābā Bandā Singh Bahadar, hīs four year old son Ajai Singh and eminent Sikhs attained martyrdom in June 1716.

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